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INDECISION AND STRESS

1950-1952

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TOP SECRET

INDECISION AND STRESS: 1950-1952

Following the failure of the North Korean attack on South Korea and the failure of the Chinese Communists to drive UN forces from Korea, Soviet leaders grew increasingly concerned about US rearmament and US-inspired integration of Western defense efforts. They apparently became particularly concerned about the establishment of US bases in various peripheral areas of the USSR. In spite of this, Soviet policy remained sterile and provocative. No new policy formulas were developed to meet the new situation. There is reason to believe that, as the months passed, this problem became more and more critical and controversy developed over Stalin's continuing inflexible line in foreign affairs.

Concurrently, the critical international situation apparently complicated Soviet internal planning problems. Revisions in the draft Five Year Plan and subsequent efforts to re-draft the plan in 1950 and 1951 probably reflected top level indecision regarding overall Soviet policy in this new situation and possibly conflict among the top Soviet leaders.

Meanwhile, domestic controversy on Soviet agricultural policy broke into the open in March 1951. There is reason to believe that Politburo member Khrushchev attempted to inaugurate a drastic change in agricultural policy, and that this program was opposed by one or more Politburo members. Speculatively, it is suggested that Malenkov backed Khrushchev, but only to a point, while Beria was the leading figure in opposition.

In August 1951, the replacement of V. S. Abakumov by S. D. Ignatiev as Chief of the MGB probably removed the MGB from Beria's area of responsibility, representing the first major upset in the power balance that had existed among the Politburo members since Zhdanov's death. Judging from the secrecy cloaking this shift and from a statement published in September 1952, it is believed that the issue involved was that of Party control over the MGB.

Later, in Soviet Georgia, a series of purges began which eliminated men who had held positions of influence there for many years. It is believed that this shake-up reflected adversely on Beria, who had retained overlordship in Georgian affairs since his departure from Georgia in 1938. Opinions differ as to whether Malenkov, or Stalin himself, initiated these purges.

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In February 1952, Stalin began the series of letters, published in October 1952 as The Economic Problems of Socialism, which constituted both ideological pronouncements and observations on current problems. Several analysts have interpreted the portions dealing with current problems as revealing significant controversy within Stalin's immediate entourage on fundamental issues, notably on the foreign policy question. The immediate challenge to Stalin's inflexible and provocative foreign policy was overruled but subsequent developments suggest that the basic conflict was not resolved. The decision to proceed full-speed with the Sovietization of Eastern Germany (evidently dating from June 1952) indicated a further hardening of Soviet foreign policy, for it necessarily involved rejection of any possibility of negotiation on Germany.

In early 1952, Soviet leaders again ordered the drafting of a five-year plan. This order appeared to reveal that definite decisions regarding both foreign and domestic policy had been taken. There were indications of controversy regarding the plan; the decisions taken did not appear to resolve the fundamental questions that are presumed to have existed.

By at least June 1952, Stalin himself began to manifest an unusually high level of personal activity. In July, he held an interview with an Italian fellow-traveller, Pietro Nenni, [redacted] 25X1 25X1

25X1 [redacted] Later, Stalin began to meet foreigners more frequently than he had done at any time since the war. He apparently did not take his regular vacation at Sochi in the fall, for he appeared at Sino-Soviet treaty ceremonies in September, the Party Congress in October and the anniversary ceremonies on 7 November. [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted]

This unusually high level of personal activity manifested by Stalin continued until his very death. In February 1953, for example, he held three interview with foreigners, two of these with ambassadors.

Sometime in mid-1952, Soviet leaders decided to convoke the 19th Party Congress. The announcement was made on 20 August, and the Congress was scheduled to begin on 5 October. The brief period between the announcement and the opening date of the conference, as well as the apparent haste evidenced in the organization of the various Republic congresses preliminary to the All-Union Congress, suggested a relatively sudden decision. The Congress itself was apparently dominated by Malenkov: The principal speeches of the Congress

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were delivered by Malenkov and by two men who are believed to have been associates or proteges at that time, Khrushchev and Saburov. Changes in Party organization and Central Committee membership which were effected at the Congress appeared to work to Malenkov's advantage; furthermore, several of Beria's important associates either disappeared or were reduced from full to alternate membership on the Central Committee.

In the period from the October Party Congress to Stalin's death, a series of events took place which appeared to reflect high political tension, behind-the-scenes maneuvering and the beginning of rapid personnel changes in important posts. These events, along with the ominous Doctors' Plot announcement, appear to indicate that a political crisis had finally developed.

In addition to the above, there were indications of changes in the relationships and responsibilities of the top Presidium figures. Foremost, of course, was the increasing prominence accorded Malenkov. Ambassador Kennan reported in June 1952 that the "bets were running toward Malenkov," indicating that Soviet officials recognized his increasing stature. Other changes took place, however, which remain obscure and unexplained.

2. In February 1953, I. G. Kabanov was identified as Chief of Gossnab which, as late as November 1951 and possibly May 1952, had been headed by Kaganovich.

FOREIGN POLICY: STALEMATE AND FRUSTRATION

With the collapse of the North Korean Army in September 1950, the Soviet leaders were faced with the dilemma of either losing all of Korea or of attempting to salvage the situation by allowing or persuading the Chinese Communists to enter the conflict. The latter course was chosen. In spite of their initial successes, however, the Chinese Communists were unable to drive UN forces out of Korea.

Meanwhile, the Korean attack and the subsequent Chinese Communist intervention had provoked the US into an extensive rearmament program, had further stimulated US efforts to strengthen Western Europe's military forces, and had accelerated the NATO base program in Europe and Africa.

The immediate Soviet reaction to these developments was one of alarm, rage and frustration. This was exemplified in Pospelov's 21 January 1951 speech, which touched off what later was to be known as the Hate-America campaign. The US Embassy in Moscow noted that this speech marked a shift in propaganda from the theme of the inevitability of capitalism's economic collapse to that of its defeat through war. The embassy further noted that this speech carried no assurances that the USSR could finally win without war or that the Soviet peoples would escape involvement. Rage and frustration were also evident in Stalin's 16 February 1951 interview with a Pravda correspondent, in which he repeatedly and bluntly called Clement Attlee, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, a liar, and gave no hint of diplomatic negotiations or compromise. Stalin declared that peace could be preserved only if "peace-loving peoples" of Western countries would take its preservation into their own hands -- against the policy of their reactionary governments.

However, initial Soviet feelers with regard to a cease-fire in Korea were made in April 1951. In April and May, military operations had culminated in massive Chinese Communist offensives, which were decisively beaten. As a result of these defeats, Soviet hopes that the Chinese might be victorious were probably dispelled. Malik's cease-fire proposal followed in mid-June, and the cease-fire talks began shortly thereafter.

The truce talks soon bogged down over Communist insistence on the 38th Parallel as the demarcation line. The Communists concurrently were preparing another major offensive, which accumulated evidence indicated was scheduled for early September 1951. This offensive was apparently suspended at the last minute and, since UN operations at that time were not large enough to prejudice the offensive, the suspension probably represented a major policy decision. The truce talks were resumed at the end of October 1951, and progressed slowly until another stalemate developed in 1952 over the prisoner-of-war question. This stalemate prevailed until after Stalin's death.

In Europe, negotiations between the USSR, the UK, France and the US resulted in the prolonged and abortive Deputy Foreign Ministers meetings in Paris from April through June 1951. While the conference originally was intended to discuss the German question, the

Soviet delegation insistently attempted to introduce the question of NATO bases. In September 1951, the Soviet Union undertook an intense diplomatic campaign, officially protesting to a number of European powers with regard to EDC and NATO bases. In Germany, a renewed propaganda campaign was begun in September for unification and a peace treaty, standard Soviet propaganda themes since the early post-war years.

Within the USSR, there were a number of indications of apprehension over and dissatisfaction with the uncompromising and inelastic Stalinist foreign policy. Observers of the Soviet Union are unanimous in the opinion that US rearmament, Western consolidation and the progress made in establishing NATO bases constituted a growing and, finally, dominating preoccupation of Soviet leaders through 1951 and 1952. Furthermore, the inexplicable shifts in Korea suggest that conflicting political tendencies were operating. This was equally evident in Soviet press discussion of foreign affairs, where there was no attempt, as Ambassador Kennan observed in June 1952, to reconcile contradictory points of view regarding future foreign developments.

Stalin's letter of February 1952, which formed the main piece of his Economic Problems of Socialism, discussed some of these questions, but arrived at no new policy formula. Stalin reaffirmed that the West was incapable of achieving lasting unity and that, regardless of Soviet intransigence, the "peace" movement and the West's own economic disputes would arouse enough disagreement in the Western world to assure its final collapse.

In this letter, Stalin identified what might be called "opposition" points of view on foreign policy when he said that "some comrades" believe wars between capitalist states are no longer inevitable. He denied as "heretical" the following points of view: the US was successfully integrating the non-Soviet Orbit powers; capitalist leaders had learned from disastrous experience to avoid future wars; and "imperialism" must attack the USSR. The foreign policy position adopted by Stalin in the February 1952 letter was much quieter in tone and content than that of one year earlier. The letter was a tension-reducing statement, affirming that there was no immediate danger of Western attack, but also giving no hint of forthcoming concessions to the West. Stalin's position was one of no adventures, but equally, no retreats.

Vacillation and possible dissension on the German question are also suggested by several events that took place between March and June 1952. In March, the USSR proposed a draft peace treaty for Germany which embodied several significant shifts from the previous

Soviet position. Mr. Kennan has interpreted the draft treaty proposal as possibly representing the temporary triumph of a "negotiation" school of thought in Moscow. Subsequent diplomatic exchanges, however, came to nothing. In June 1952 the Soviet Ambassador to the German Democratic Republic, G. M. Pushkin, was replaced by I. I. Ilichev. In July, a harsh Sovietization program was finally inaugurated, involving collectivization, increased attention to the creation of an East German army, intensified security measures and the sealing off of the GDR from West Germany.

Thus, Soviet policy on Germany finally crystallized, and restraints which previously had held back the conversion of the GDR into a "normal" Satellite disappeared. 25X1

INDECISION IN INDUSTRIAL PLANNING

Stalin discussed industrial plans in his Economic Problems of Socialism. Again the document of chief interest is his February 1952 letter, since subsequent letters merely elaborated one or another aspect of the first one. As in the case of foreign policy questions, Stalin merely reaffirmed and defended the prevailing course of Soviet policy, rejecting "radical" solutions of either extreme. In other words, he defended the standing policy of investments in the capital goods industries, and rejected the possibility of major changes, either in favor of heavier investment in armament production or in consumer goods.

It will be recalled that the Soviet rearmament program, begun in 1948, was probably scheduled for completion in late 1951 or early 1952. It thus seems very likely that the issue of the future emphasis of the investment program was sidetracked, i.e., that it was postponed until the rearmament program neared completion and until it became evident whether or not the USSR was faced with a serious possibility of war. Stalin apparently decided in late 1951 or early 1952 that circumstances did not call for major increases in Soviet armaments investment; yet, in making this decision, he was apparently subjected to considerable pressure to expand significantly the production of consumers goods. This he refused to do.

CONTROVERSY ON AGRICULTURE

It will be recalled that in February 1950 Politburo member Andreev was criticized for defending small-scale farming operations, and that subsequently N. S. Khrushchev, also a Politburo member, became the leading Soviet spokesman on agricultural policy. On 25 April 1950, Khrushchev began a new policy of merging small collective farms into larger ones; later, a Party Central Committee decree apparently applied this policy to the whole USSR.

The new agricultural policy provided for more than just administrative merger of the kolkhozes. On 28 January 1951 Khrushchev in a speech advocated not only the merger of the kolkhozes, but also the actual resettlement of peasants belonging to the merged kolkhozes in single "urban" centers, known as "agro-cities". The personal plots of land possessed by the individual peasants were to be located

on the outskirts of the new settlement, thus contributing to the "proletarianization" of the peasantry.

Soviet press treatment of two Khrushchev speeches on new agricultural policy provides the first indication that the new policy may have run into trouble. He delivered a major speech on the merger of the kolkhozes on 20 December 1950, but it was not published until 8 February 1951. A second speech on 28 January 1951, in which he discussed the agro-city proposal, was not published until 4 March. Pravda, which published this speech, carried a curious editorial note the following day stating that Khrushchev's article had been run as material for discussion, thus implying that it was not a statement of policy.

"Discussion" was not long delayed. A speech delivered by G. A. Arutyunov of Soviet Armenia, published in the Armenian Kommunist (daily newspaper) on 21 March, had this to say: "In connection with amalgamation of small collective farms, some comrades have made statements sowing confusion...(they declare) that one of the main problems of the amalgamated farms is to move small villages, i.e., merge the population of small villages and resettle it in one village....I am of the opinion that these proposals are closer to fantasy than to the real requirements of the collective farms....I will not dwell on other unacceptable proposals...(regarding) reducing private garden plots...."

On 26 May 1951, Bakinskii Rabochii of Baku published a speech of M. D. A. Bagirov, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Soviet Azerbaijan, in which Bagirov asserted that the "Party had demanded an end" to the "incorrect idea" that the most important task in kolkhoz construction was the moving of small villages into single kolkhoz settlements. He also said that the practice of reducing the size of the garden plot near the peasant's home and moving part of his plot beyond settlement limits was harmful and intolerable. Most curiously, when Pravda published Bagirov's speech on 29 May 1951, it omitted this aspect.

Following the above developments, the agro-city concept disappeared from prominence, but the program of kolkhoz amalgamation continued. Malenkov, at the 19th Party Congress in October 1952, asserted that, as a result of the merger program, the number of collective farms had been reduced from 254,000 to 97,000. With regard to the agro-city program, Malenkov said that "certain of our leading officials have indulged in a wrong approach," their mistake being that they had "overlooked" the main task, i.e., agricultural production. Stalin, in his Economic Problems of Socialism, avoided direct mention of the agro-city policy but, in discussing the

elimination of essential differences between "town and country," said that "new great towns will appear as centers of the maximum development of culture, and as centers not only of large-scale industry, but also of the processing of agricultural produce...and will tend to even up conditions of life in town and country." He discussed the agricultural problem at length in each of his letters (February, April, May and September). In general, Stalin's discussion envisaged the ultimate elimination of the "free market" aspects of Soviet agriculture and the expansion of so-called "product exchange" as the ideal market relationship between kolkhozes and the rest of the economy. This "product-exchange" is simply a form of barter which takes place between the kolkhozes and the Soviet Government. Stalin envisaged that product-exchange would eventually displace all forms of marketing engaged in by the kolkhozes. However, Stalin repeatedly emphasized the long-term nature of this program and stressed the necessity for proceeding slowly and cautiously.

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The question now is: What did these various developments signify: It has been argued that the kolkhoz merger and agro-city proposals had been originated by Stalin himself, and then withdrawn when they ran into peasant resistance. Some observers have considered the agro-city program to have been an experiment in developing a new form of agricultural organization. A third hypothesis is that the merger and agro-city proposals had been advanced by some one figure or another below Stalin, and these proposals met with disagreement within the Politburo. While the problems involved in these hypotheses cannot be definitely answered, some possibilities can be suggested.

The handling of the agro-city proposal in Arutyunov's and Bagirov's speeches suggests that it also was intended to be Union-wide. The fact that the agro-city proposal was rejected so promptly after its inauguration, without allowing time for the "experiment" to run its course, also suggests that it had not been conceived as an experimental program.

It seems unlikely that the merger program and agro-city proposals were merely experimental in nature. The merger program, while begun in the Moscow Oblast, was not limited to it, but rather was applied Union-wide later in the same year.

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[redacted] Furthermore, as previously noted, a Party Central Committee decree was issued on the subject. Lastly, the program was continued even after the agro-city proposal was repudiated. With regard to the agro-city proposal, it also appears that this was not an experimental program, although the evidence in this case is less definite.

These latter considerations also argue against the idea that the agro-city proposal was one which had been originated by Stalin, and then abandoned in the face of widespread peasant resistance. In particular, it is very unlikely that Arutyunov and Bagirov would have discussed it in such strong language (i.e., "fantastic" and "unacceptable" proposals) if the program had been initiated personally by Stalin.

There is good reason to suppose that both the kolkhoz merger and the agro-city proposals originated with Khrushchev: It was Khrushchev who took over from Andreev in 1950 the position of Politburo spokesman on agriculture. Secondly, the kolkhoz merger program was begun by Khrushchev in Moscow Oblast at least by April 1950, and it was not until later that year that a Central Committee decree was issued on the subject. This suggests that Khrushchev had begun the program in Moscow Oblast before it was All-Union Party policy. Finally, Khrushchev, in his three speeches on the merger program and the agro-city proposal, continually cited illustrative experiences from the Ukraine, where he had been First Secretary from 1938 to 1949 (except for a brief period in 1947), suggesting that he was attempting to sell, on an All-Union basis, policies he had previously developed in the Ukraine.

The last question concerns the nature and identification of opposition to the agro-city proposal. It is generally conceded that Arutyunov and Bagirov had Politburo level support before they made their speeches denouncing the agro-city proposal. Likewise, the curious editorial note opening Khrushchev's 28 January 1951 speech "for discussion" is considered to be highly irregular and possibly indicative of top-level dissension. Lastly, it may be noted that Khrushchev, unlike Andreev the year previous, was not required to apologize or recant for his "incorrect" views.

Who formed this opposition? Andreev had been humiliated the previous year (1950) and he did not reappear as a prominent figure following repudiation of Khrushchev in 1951. Malenkov had been, and still was at the time of the dispute, actively concerned with agricultural problems, [redacted] nor did he lose jurisdiction over agriculture following Khrushchev's repudiation. Neither Malenkov nor Stalin, in their respective

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statements on the subject in 1952, criticized the agro-city concept per se; Malenkov, it is true, did criticize it in terms of timing.

One clue is provided by the allegation that Beria exercised overlordship over the Soviet Transcaucasus, within which are both Soviet Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as Georgia. Thus it may have been the case that Arutyunov and Bagirov, in their attacks on Khrushchev's proposals, were speaking with Beria's approval and support[1/]. 25X1 [redacted] has reported a close association between Arutyunov and Beria. Bagirov likewise has been reported on close terms with Beria, although there is conflicting evidence on this point.

REPLACEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY

In August of 1951, a development of major importance took place when Minister of State Security Abakumov was replaced by S. D. Ignatiev, a Communist Party functionary. Abakumov had held this position since July 1946. Following his replacement, at least nine Republic MGB Ministers were replaced, while four new Deputy Ministers appeared at the Ministry in Moscow. [redacted] 25X1

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These Party appointments, as well as an unusual statement by the new MGB Minister in Georgia, A. I. Kochlavashvili, which was published in September 1952, shed some light on this shift. Kochlavashvili stressed the need for more effective Party control over the

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1/ This supposition was given added weight on the occasion of Beria's purge. On 10 July 1952 the Pravda editorial stated: "It has now been established that Beria, under various fictitious excuses, hindered in every way the solution of very important, urgent problems in the sphere of agriculture. This was done to undermine the collective farms and to create difficulties in the country's food supply." This charge was a very curious one, since Beria had never been overtly associated with agriculture, nor was the charge subsequently elaborated to any extent in propaganda on the Beria case. It may be that the present leaders do not wish to go into concrete aspects of the Beria "agricultural platform" for domestic political reasons.

local MGB and continued vigilance by local MGB organs. He criticized local Party organs for insufficient attention to the political education of the security police, and declared that the Georgian Central Committee had sent "experienced Party workers" into the MGB. He promised that this practice would continue in the future. The most significant aspect of Koshlavashvili's speech is its suggestion that Party supremacy had been jeopardized by the actions and negligence of the police; the admonition to follow Party directives and the transfer of Party workers to the MGB imply that the MGB organization had been becoming a law unto itself. In addition, a report of December 1951 asserted that Abakumov's replacement had been due to criticism of the security organ.

While there is no firm information on the actual reasons for this MGB shift or on the details and ramifications of it, the replacement of Abakumov by a Party figure could not have been anything but a blow to Politburo member Beria. Abakumov was of Transcaucasian origin, and in 1938 was a junior security officer in the Caucasus. In 1940 or 1941 he became Beria's counter-intelligence chief and in 1943, after the NKGB was separated from the NKVD, he became a Deputy Minister of the NKGB. He replaced Merkulov as Minister in mid-1946. Thereafter the MGB (formerly NKGB) continued gradually to gather under its jurisdiction all police and militia functions. 25X1

25X1 Beria retained Politburo level responsibility for State Security matters, at least up to May of 1950. Beria was last associated with security questions in February 1951; at that time he went to Prague for a series of conferences following the widespread arrests of key men in the Czechoslovak Communist Party and Czech security apparatus.

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THE GEORGIAN PURGES

Another area in which previous and long-standing arrangements were changed was in the Georgian Republic, from the latter part of 1951 through August 1952. During this period there was a complete reshuffling of positions, in the course of which all of the Central Committee secretaries were changed, the Buro of the Central Committee was completely revamped, and many of the Ministries, including those of Internal Affairs and State Security, were given new chiefs.

The personnel shifts began in November 1951, when the Georgian Central Committee removed M. I. Baramiya from his post as Second

Secretary and expelled A. N. Rapava, Minister of Justice and former Minister of State Security from the Party. Rapava and Shoniya, the Procurator of the Republic, were relieved of their offices and turned over to the courts for prosecution. These actions climaxed disclosures of large-scale embezzlement in one of the largest Tbilisi construction trusts; the charges against the three men included the assertion that, as is "well known," they "gave protection to various workers who had perpetrated crimes, and in every way defended them." At the same time K. Chichinadze and V. Kuprava were removed from their positions in the Georgian apparatus for "mistakes in...selecting cadres." The purges continued in December 1951 and January 1952. The First Secretary of the Komsomol, I. S. Zodelava, was removed and replaced by M. Megrelishvili.

Later, at an April 1952 meeting of the Georgian Central Committee, which L. P. Beria attended, Georgian First Secretary Charkviani was removed from his position and replaced by A. I. Mgeladze, who had been prominent in Komsomol work and was at the time First Secretary of the Abkhaz ASSR. Charkviani, who had held his post as Georgian First Secretary since 1938, had presided at a January meeting in Tbilisi of leading officials at which economic malfeasance in many ministries was aired. In the words of N. Rukhadze, the Minister of State Security, Charkviani's sin had been "a blunting of vigilance and...political blindness," which had "enabled hostile elements to ingratiate themselves, occupy responsible positions, and inflect damage on Party work and the Georgian people." It was reported that Charkviani had "departed from the limits of the Republic." Consequently, he was removed from the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet as well as from his other posts.

Charkviani's removal did not end the purge. In April 1952, the four remaining old secretaries of the Georgian Komsomol were removed, and in July, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Trade and even Rukhadze, the Minister of State Security, fell. At the Georgian Party Congress in September 1952, it was revealed that nineteen governmental officials had lost their jobs between June and August, and that Kvirkveliyz, who had been made a Secretary of the Central Committee only the previous December, had already lost his post.

The official charges had sufficient truth in them to constitute a partial justification for the complete overhaul of Georgian personnel. Economic inefficiency on the part of governmental officials, collusion with Party personnel, embezzlement and other economic crimes, and an increase in Georgian nationalistic outbursts were, in themselves, sufficient to condemn Party leadership in Georgia. These charges carried over into the Georgian Party Congress held in September 1952 and formed the major substance of the speeches. The cry

went up for vigilance against economic saboteurs and internal and external enemies of the State who were trying to undermine socialist advances at the behest of the capitalists.

There can be little doubt that this purge was directed from Moscow. [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] Stalin himself ordered the shake-up in Georgia. [redacted] Stalin 25X1
ordered the purge following a visit there in 1951; [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] Stalin's visit had in part been motivated by mounting rumors of embezzlement and other irregularities in Georgian affairs.
25X1 [redacted]
25X1 [redacted] there were rumors that the purge of November 1951 was personally directed by Malenkov, acting as Stalin's emissary. [redacted] these purges weakened 25X1
Beria's position considerably.

Throughout the period, propaganda insisted that the purge was instituted under the direct guidance of Stalin and, after Beria's attendance at the Plenum of 1 April which removed Charkviani, the Tbilisi newspaper Zarya Vostoka wrote that Beria "aided in...uncovering the mistakes and shortcomings in the work of the Georgian Party organizations." [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted]

There is ample reason, despite Beria's presence at the April 1952 Central Committee meeting and the propaganda associating him with the purges, for believing that the Georgian purges were an adverse reflection on him. Beria has been assumed to have had a personal interest in Georgian affairs for many years, but Stalin, a Georgian by birth, had also taken a personal interest in these same affairs. The severity of the purges may have been an indication of Stalin's personal dissatisfaction with the course of events there.

STALIN'S "ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM"

Frequent reference has been made throughout this paper to Stalin's Economic Problems of Socialism, published on 2 October 1952.1/ The publication of this document, with its accompanying

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1/ There will be no attempt here to recapitulate Stalin's declaration on particular policy problems, which were covered in the appropriate sections. The attempt here, rather, is to present certain aspects of the Economic Problems not easily discussed in the other sections.

propaganda fanfare, tended to overshadow the opening of the Party Congress three days later.

The Economic Problems is a series of four letters, ostensibly written by Stalin, dated 1 February, 21 April, 22 May and 28 September 1952. The first letter constitutes a commentary by Stalin on the proceedings of a conference of economists, purportedly held in November 1951, which discussed a draft textbook on the "political economy of Socialism."1/ The other three letters are replies to economists who had written to Stalin in response to his first letter.

Stalin's letters discussed Communist politico-economic theory, the prerequisites for attaining Communism in the USSR, and the inevitability of war between capitalist states. As has already been noted, a large part of the discussion of the transition to Communism concerned the Soviet agricultural problem and commodity exchange in the USSR. As one study of Soviet economic theory has pointed out, Stalin's Economic Problems selectively summed up pertinent trends evident in Soviet theoretical thinking since the war.2/ Another summary declared it to be "a theoretical grounding of policies and an attempt to settle troublesome points of theory never satisfactorily reconciled with reality."3/

Isaac Deutcher has noted that "the transition from Socialism to Communism is...the chief 'double-talk' formula for the discussion of real problems" in Stalin's letters.4/ The author further commented:

1/ Such a textbook had long been discussed in the USSR, but an acceptable book had never been produced. In 1947, Zhdanov mentioned that one was being prepared. According to Dedijer's biography of Tito, Malenkov told the Yugoslavs in September 1947 that Soviet theorists were working out Soviet politico-economic doctrine on the basis of Utopian Socialism. [redacted] reported rumors 25X1
in 1949 or 1950 that Stalin had assigned to Malenkov the task of preparing a standard work on the economic principles of Communism; reportedly the task was entrusted to a special commission under Malenkov's direction. [redacted] the stories were 25X1
told in the form of a joke.

2/ Soviet Studies, April 1953, "A Political Economy in the Making," J. Miller.

3/ Current Soviet Policies, the Current Digest of the Soviet Press.

4/ Soviet Studies, April 1953, "Dogma and Reality in Stalin's 'Economic Problems,'" I. Deutscher. This article had been written before Stalin's death.

"Stalin's recent writings offer a glimpse of the movement of ideas going on in the Soviet ruling circles behind the half-real and half-deceptive facade of uniformity. It is this movement that distinguishes present day Russia from the Russia of the late thirties which was from head to foot stunned and petrified after the shock of the great purges. The movement of ideas reflects conflicting social aspirations and pressures which even a monolithic regime is not in a position to eliminate for good."

Deutscher goes on to suggest that the discussions of the "transition from socialism to communism," which had been started in 1947, had provided an opportunity for implicit criticism of the regime: "The guesses about the future sometimes sound like reflections on the present -- this is not the first time that Utopia is either an implied critique of existing society or an escape from it."

Ambassador Kennan's analysis of the Economic Problems, on 20 October 1952, drew attention to two significant aspects of the document. Mr. Kennan described the view of the world put forward by Stalin as "a very old-fashioned view," reminiscent of the thirties and appearing to ignore "all that has happened in the intervening fourteen years" since Hitler's attack on Poland. Mr. Kennan went on to say:

"We see reflected (in this) the fact that this Soviet Government is today an old man's government, ruthless and terrible to be sure, but insensitive to the contemporary evolution of its external environment just as it is to the deeper experiences of its own subject peoples, living in its own past..."1/

Mr. Kennan then analyzed certain political implications of Stalin's discussion of the capitalist world, and noted that, judging from the letters, the view Stalin had put forward was not a unanimous view in the Kremlin but one that had been opposed by a group which doubted its soundness and challenged it.

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"It requires no great stretch of the imagination to see that this difference of opinion was no abstract disagreement about the nature of capitalism; it was a policy issue of greatest moment. Whoever said that it was dangerous to depend on the internal break-up of capitalism and the development of another war between Germany and the western powers, presumably said that you had to face up to the reality of the western coalition and its growing strength, which meant that you had to prepare sooner or later to fight it or to come to some sort of accommodation with it --- whether to do the one or the other to depend, we must assume, on what terms you could get. This, however, meant negotiations --- and not only 'demonstrative' negotiations for propaganda purposes, or disarming approaches to weaker members of the western coalition with divisive intent, but actually negotiations with the major member of the western coalition: the United States.

"This view was obviously overruled. There are only two major arguments that could have been used against it by the dominant group whose views found Stalin's support. The first is the argument that has now been made public: it is unnecessary to negotiate with the Americans; their world, with a little help from us, will go to pieces on them anyway. The second argument, however, may have been: it is impossible to negotiate with the Americans; they are bent only on the overthrow of the Soviet system, by subversion or war as the case may be; they could never be induced to negotiate seriously. Plainly, to the extent that this latter thesis can be established it overshadows and renders unnecessary further discussion of thesis number one. But it is thesis number one which has been revealed as the real center of ideological disagreement in Kremlin circles."

THE NINETEENTH PARTY CONGRESS: OCTOBER 1952

On 20 August 1952, it was announced that the long overdue Party Congress would be convened on 6 October.

There is some evidence which suggests that the Party Congress was to have been held in 1948 or 1949. For example, the new name which the Party adopted in October 1952, i.e., Communist Party of the Soviet Union, had been used by Suslov, Malenkov and others during 1948. [redacted] 25X1 to a forthcoming Party Congress, and there were many rumors in 1948 and 1949 that one would soon be held. Moreover, as Mr. Kennan has pointed out, it is doubtful that the Soviet Union would have accused

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Tito and the Yugoslavs of not having held a Party Congress for many years if they were not planning to hold one soon themselves. Thus it appears very probable that the Congress was indeed planned at that time, but for some unknown reason was suspended.

When the Congress was finally convoked, the period allowed for the holding of preparatory regional Congresses was extremely short, and in many cases there was evidence of haste.

The announcement calling the Congress outlined as subjects for "discussion" a series of changes in the Party statutes. Two of the most important changes indicated were the dissolution of the Orgburo (one of the three bodies which had been set up originally to handle matters in lieu of meetings of the Central Committee) and a change in the name of the Politburo. The new Presidium, as the Politburo was to be called, would "control the work of the Central Committee between plenary sessions," and the Secretariat was to "control current work, primarily organizing verification of fulfillment of Party decisions and selection of cadres."

As was the case with the other changes in the Party statutes, these changes seemed intended to regularize already existing practices rather than to institute new ones. The Orgburo apparently had ceased to function, and the authority of the Secretariat in personnel matters had been increased accordingly. Both the Secretariat and the Orgburo had been controlled by the Politburo, which was responsible for final policy decisions and, in the person of Stalin, had exercised ultimate authority in the selection of personnel for all important posts. The new statutes abolishing the Orgburo and assigning personnel selection "primarily" to the Secretariat did not therefore reduce the authority of Stalin and other top Politburo (Presidium) members over top-level personnel matters.

The Presidium that was appointed at the Congress was much larger than the old Politburo and may have been designed largely as an honorary body. While the Politburo had 11 full members and one alternate, the Presidium included 25 full members and 11 alternates. This loose, unwieldy body may never have met; decisions probably were taken in its name by a "Buro" of the Presidium, a body whose existence was not acknowledged until Stalin's death.[1] An analysis of

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the composition of the Presidium gives us some clues as to its probable function, as well as to the probable membership of the "Buro".

The most important members of this body were the ten men from the old 12-member Politburo: Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Khrushchev and Shvernik.1/ The only portraits prominently displayed in Red Square on November 7th were of these ten leaders. The treatment these men received in propaganda, and references after Stalin's death to a "Buro" of the Presidium, suggests that the Presidium as a whole was in no sense a ruling body, but rather that the old Politburo members constituted its nucleus.

The remainder of the Presidium was composed, for the most part, of two categories of personnel: Government and Party administrators on the level just below the old Politburo, and regional Party secretaries or members of the Central Party apparatus. The former group included the four remaining Deputy Chairmen of the Council of Ministers who had not been in the Politburo, Pervukhin, Saburov, Malyshev and Tevosyan; two members of the old Secretariat, Ponomarkenko and Suslov; the Secretary of the Komsomol, Mikhailov; the head of the Party Control Commission, M. F. Shkiryatov; and, among others, Vyshinsky, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Zverev, the Minister of Finance.

Party Secretaries from key areas and Party and propaganda specialists comprised the balance of the 36-member Presidium. Andrianov from Leningrad, Korotchenko and Melnikov from the Ukraine, Aristov from Chelyabinsk and Brezhnev from Moldavia were a few of the regional officials to be included. From the Central Committee apparatus came N. M. Pegov, head of the Light Industry Section. D. I. Chesnokov, Chief Editor of Questions of Philosophy, P. F. Yudin and M. B. Mitin represented the Party propaganda specialists.

25X1 [redacted] the Politburo had ruled through a system of committees which handled various aspects of Soviet policy, and that top level administrators had reported to these committees on technical aspects of problems; the inclusion on the Presidium of those members of the technical bureaucracy who presumably would have reported to these committees suggests that much of the enlargement of the Presidium was a formal recognition of this system.

1/ Politburo member A. A. Andreev was dropped completely, while A. N. Kosygin was reduced to candidate membership of the new Presidium.

At the same time, the enlargement of the Presidium and the Secretariat, as well as of the Central Committee itself, created more honorary positions in the top hierarchy for deserving Party members. Soviet leaders may have been concerned over the gap which had been developing between the top and lower echelons of the Party hierarchy. Since the 1930's, real power had been concentrated in a small, self-perpetuating group which the Party functionary had little hope of ever entering. [redacted] Party functionaries had lost their early ideological fervor and had become primarily concerned with maintaining their positions, raising their own standards of living, even illegally, and eluding the Party's multiple control mechanisms. 25X1

At the Congress, the spate of criticism directed against bureaucratism and the repeated demands for improved leadership pointed to the growth of this self-seeking group as one of the regime's most pressing internal problems. To alleviate this situation, the Kremlin was tightening controls, demanding greater Party discipline, and placing increased emphasis on education and criticism and self-criticism.

At the same time, however, new rules concerning methods of expulsion from the Party were introduced as a means of safeguarding the position of the members of the hierarchy. It was stipulated that, on the lower levels, a member was to be allowed to continue to take a full part in the work of his cell, including its secret meetings, until his exclusion had been ratified by higher committees. For members of the Party committees at any level, expulsion was to be decided upon by a two-thirds majority of the plenary session of the committee to which the member belonged. The expulsion of an All-Union Central Committee member was to be decided upon by a Party Congress, to be convened once in every four years, or by the All-Union Central Committee between congresses. In this way, while the new rules made greater demands on Party members, they also made their positions, at least formally, more secure.

Of the five new members added to the Secretariat, only two had been full members of the old Central Committee elected in 1939. The remaining three had been alternates; one of them, N. G. Ignatov, had been elected as an alternate member in 1939 but excluded in 1941 for failure to discharge his duties. His return to membership, not only on the Central Committee but on the Presidium and the Secretariat as well, suggested the backing of some powerful figure on the old Politburo level. N. M. Pegov, another of the newly elected members of the Presidium and Secretariat, had worked in the Central Committee apparatus since at least 1947 when he was identified as Chief of the Light Industry Section. [redacted] 25X1

The election to the Central Committee of 125 full members and 111 candidates broke a precedent set in the late 1920's when the full membership was stabilized at 71 and the candidate membership at 68. Prior to this time, the Central Committee had reflected the continued growth in Party membership. The stabilization in 1927, despite a continually growing Party membership, occurred after Stalin had completely consolidated his personal supremacy by packing Party organizations with his own appointees.

The expansion of the Central Committee in October 1952 indicated the elevation of Party careerists over specialists and technicians from other sections of society and clearly indicated the comparative importance of the professional Party worker. This development probably increased Malenkov's influence in this body, since he was the Party organization specialist and therefore probably had had a great deal to say in these appointments.

of the 156 new Central Committee members, some 61 full members and 17 candidates are Party careerists, as contrasted with some 15 full members and 47 candidates who have governmental assignments. Seventy percent of the full members of the Central Committee have come up through Party ranks. Only 26 of the 236 Central Committee members have military command assignments; in 1939 the ratio was 20 to 139, and in 1941 it was 27 to 139. After 1941 there were nine full members of the Central Committee who were career military men; the new Central Committee has only five. Several officers who previously had been full members were dropped to alternate status. Rather than having increased its share of these honorary positions, the military appeared to have lost considerable ground.

The belated announcement on 30 October that Marshal G. A. Govorov had been inadvertently left off the list of candidate members aroused speculation regarding the operation of behind-the-scenes influences involving military leaders. Observers pointed out that a mistake of this nature was inconceivable and that some disgruntled element must have forced the addition of Govorov to the Central Committee after the initial selection. Govorov, it will be remembered, was apparently part of, or on the periphery of, the Zhdanov "faction," and he later figured in the Doctors' Plot announcement.

The problem of succession was not dealt with overtly in the major readjustment of Party leadership at the conclusion of the 19th Party Congress. However, the increased importance accorded to the

regional Party secretaries, as demonstrated in their election to the leading Party organs, reemphasized Malenkov's key position. Since the basis of their selection appears to have been more their personal qualifications and connections than the significance of the geographical areas which they represented, it is highly probable that they owed their advancement to Malenkov, as well as to Stalin. The Congress itself was apparently dominated, at least indirectly, by Malenkov since it was he who delivered the keynote address, i.e., the "report" of the Central Committee, which at past Congresses had been given by Stalin.

POST-CONGRESS DEVELOPMENTS: POLITICAL CRISIS

Every republic Congress held before the 19th All-Union Congress strongly emphasized the need for vigilance, stressing that the bourgeois nationalist rather than the actual "spy" was the root of trouble. Only the Congresses in Georgia, Lithuania and Estonia specifically cited foreign spies -- British, American and Turkish -- as the enemy to be watched, but even here the internal enemy, the bourgeois nationalist and the lax person, was strongly condemned.

The uniformity of certain remarks made at these congresses, concerning espionage and hostile actions by kulaks and bourgeois nationalists and concerning negligence and crime by industrial managers and workers, pointed to the existence of one or more central Party directives on these subjects. The cause for these criticisms seems to have been long-standing apathy toward Party aims, neglect of responsibility and failure to react properly to the line of Great Russian nationalism. Speeches at the 19th Congress left no doubt concerning these problems. Malenkov, Suslov, Bulganin and Poskrebyshev, among others, strongly warned against such errors. The Party statutes, which increased the Party members' duties and made ideological study mandatory, were aimed at erasing apathy.

Throughout November 1952 a number of arrests for crimes ranging from embezzlement to cheating the public and state were announced in the press. On 2 December, the death penalty was imposed on three persons charged with leading a gang in "speculation, embezzlement, and racketeering." This was the first application of the death penalty for economic crimes since this penalty had been reintroduced in January 1950. Also in December 1952, an editorial and propaganda campaign was begun against "wool gathering" and "gullibility."

Following the October Party Congress, a number of other events indicated continued political tension and maneuvering behind the scenes.

1. On 30 October, fifteen days after the conclusion of the Party Congress and the publication of the list of new Central Committee members, a special announcement stated that the name of Marshall L. A. Govorov had been mistakenly omitted from the list of Central Committee members. He was added to the Central Committee as an alternate member.

2. On 24 December, an article in Pravda by M. A. Suslov criticized P. Fedoseev for having written articles on Stalin's Economic Problems of Socialism without at the same time admitting that he too had held the erroneous views denounced by Stalin. Fedoseev's articles had appeared in Izvestia about two weeks earlier. Fedoseev hastily apologized in public for this error, while the Izvestia editorial board apologized for permitting the articles to run. In his article, Suslov questioned whether or not Fedoseev was "being sly" and had really changed his views.

3. D. T. Shepilov, ousted from Agitprop in 1949 for numerous "shortcomings" including complicity in the Voznesensky affair, was identified in mid-December as the new editor of Pravda.

4. On 13 January 1953, the Doctors' Plot was announced.

5. In January 1953, conferences of economists and of social scientists were held, in which various figures apologized for having held the incorrect views criticized by Stalin. The chief report at the session of the Academy of Sciences on 31 January 1953 was given by Pavel Yudin. In these conferences, numerous specific figures were criticized, while Yudin, in his speech disclosed that the proscribed views were widely held in high Soviet circles.

6. It was learned in January that Pospelov had been removed as head of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute and reassigned as a Deputy Editor of Pravda. At the 21 January ceremonies commemorating the anniversary of Lenin's death, the principal speech was given by N. A. Mikhailov; since 1949, this speech had been delivered by Pospelov. Curiously, for the first time since 1925, the Soviet press failed to publish the list of Politburo members who had attended.

7. On 6 February, Pravda published a vitriolic article entitled "Revolutionary Vigilance," which was striking in the extent to which it revealed disputes. The article lashed out at "certain rotten theories," i.e., that capitalist encirclement no longer exists, and that capitalism will renounce its

attempts to harm the increasingly strong Soviet Union. The article charged that "Soviet successes" had given rise to moods of complacency, self-satisfaction and conceit. In its pronouncements on foreign policy, the article appeared to both paraphrase and supplement Stalin's foreign policy discussion of February 1952. Its sharp tone, in the context of the vigilance campaign following the Doctors' Plot announcement, suggested that the foreign policy disputes had not been resolved, but rather had become more acute, over the year since February 1952.